



Miss Universe 2024 Victoria Kjaer Theilvig visits Aruba



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Trump fires Democratic commissioner of independent agency that oversees nuclear safety

By JENNIFER McDERMOTT and MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has fired a Democratic commissioner for the federal agency that oversees nuclear safety as he continues to assert more control over independent regulatory agencies.

Christopher Hanson, a former chairman of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, said in a statement Monday that Trump terminated his position as NRC commissioner without cause, "contrary to existing law and longstanding precedent regarding removal of independent agency appointees."

The firing of Hanson comes as Trump seeks to take authority away from the independent safety agency, which has regulated the U.S. nuclear industry for five decades. Trump signed executive orders in May intended to quadruple domestic production of nuclear power within the next 25 years, a goal experts say the United States is highly unlikely to reach. To speed up the development of nuclear power, the orders grant the U.S. energy secretary authority to approve some advanced reactor designs and projects.



President Donald Trump participates in a session of the G7 Summit, Monday, June 16, 2025, in Kananaskis, Canada.

White House spokesperson Anna Kelly told reporters that "all organizations are more effective when leaders are rowing in the same direction" and that the Republican president reserves the right to remove employees within the executive branch who exert his executive authority.

Trump fired two of the three Democratic commissioners at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, an independent federal agency responsible for enforcing federal laws that

prohibit discrimination in the workplace. In a similar move, two National Labor Relations Board members were fired. Willie Phillips, a Democratic member and former chairman of the independent Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, stepped down in April, telling reporters that the White House asked him to do so. Trump also signed an executive order to give the White House direct control of independent federal regulators such as the Securities and Exchange

Commission, the Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Communications Commission. New Jersey Rep. Frank Pallone, the top Democrat on the the House Energy and Commerce Committee, called Hanson's firing illegal and another attempt by Trump to undermine independent agencies and consolidate power in the White House. "Congress explicitly created the NRC as an independent agency, insulated from the whims of any president, knowing that was

the only way to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the American people," Pallone said in a statement. Senate Democrats also said Trump overstepped his authority. Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray and Martin Heinrich said in a joint statement that "Trump's lawlessness" threatens the commission's ability to ensure that nuclear power plants and nuclear materials are safe and free from political interference.

Hanson was nominated to the commission by Trump in 2020. He was appointed chair by President Joe Biden in January 2021 and served in that role until Trump's inauguration to a second term as president. Trump selected David Wright, a Republican member of the commission, to serve as chair. Hanson continued to serve on the NRC as a commissioner. His term was due to end in 2029.

Wright's term expires on June 30. The White House has not said if he will be re-appointed.

Edwin Lyman, director of nuclear power safety at the Union of Concerned Scientists, called Hanson a dedicated public servant and a strong supporter of the NRC's public health and safety mission. □

Dismissed members of CDC vaccine committee call Kennedy's actions 'destabilizing'



Robert Kennedy Jr., center, President-elect Donald Trump's pick to lead the Health and Human Services Department, walks between meetings with senators on Capitol Hill, Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024, in Washington.

Associated Press

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — All 17 experts recently dismissed from a government vaccine advisory panel published an essay Monday decrying "destabilizing decisions" made by U.S. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. that could lead to more preventable disease spread. Kennedy last week announced he would "retire" the entire panel that guides U.S. vaccine policy. He also quietly removed Dr. Melinda Wharton the veteran Centers for Disease Control and Prevention official who coordinated the committee's meetings. Two days later, he named eight new people to the influential panel. The list included a scientist who criticized COVID-19 vaccines, a leading critic of pandemic-era lockdowns and someone who worked with a group widely considered to be a leading source of vaccine misinformation. "We are deeply

concerned that these destabilizing decisions, made without clear rationale, may roll back the achievements of U.S. immunization policy, impact people's access to lifesaving vaccines, and ultimately put U.S. families at risk of dangerous and preventable illnesses," the 17 panelists wrote in the Journal of the American Medical Association. The new committee is scheduled to meet next week. The agenda for that meeting has not yet been posted, but a recent federal notice said votes are expected on vaccinations against flu, COVID-19, HPV, RSV and meningococcal bacteria. The removal of Wharton and CDC immunization staff cuts will make it hard for a group of new outside advisers to quickly come up to speed and make fact-based decisions about what vaccines to recommend and not recommend to the public, the experts said. □

As GOP pushes spending cuts, many say Medicaid and food stamps are underfunded: AP-NORC poll

By LINLEY SANDERS

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As Republican senators consider President Donald Trump's big bill that could slash federal spending and extend tax cuts, a new survey shows most U.S. adults don't think the government is overspending on the programs the GOP has focused on cutting, like Medicaid and food stamps. Americans broadly support increasing or maintaining existing levels of funding for popular safety net programs, including Social Security and Medicare, according to the poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

They're more divided on spending around the military and border security, and most think the government is spending too much on foreign aid.

The poll points to a disconnect between Republicans' policy agenda and public sentiment around the domestic programs that are up for debate in the coming weeks.

Here's the latest polling data on how Americans view federal funding:

Most want Medicaid and SNAP funding increased or kept as is



A demonstrator on wheelchair protests outside the office of Sen. Bill Cassidy, R-La., on the proposed cuts to Medicaid on Capitol Hill, in Washington, Wednesday, June 11, 2025.

Associated Press

Many Americans see Medicaid and food assistance programs as underfunded even as Congress proposes significant cuts to Medicaid and food and nutrition assistance programs and few say "too much" money is going to these programs. About half of U.S. adults say "too little" funding goes to Medicaid, which is a government health care coverage program for low-income people and people with certain disabilities. Nearly half, 45%,

say food and nutrition assistance programs like food stamps, SNAP or EBT cards are underfunded, according to the poll. About 3 in 10 U.S. adults in each case say those programs are receiving "about the right amount" of funding, indicating that most Americans likely do not want to see significant cuts to the two programs.

About 2 in 10 say Medicaid is overfunded, while about one-quarter say that about food assistance programs.

Republicans are especially likely to say "too much" is spent on food and nutrition assistance programs when compared with Democrats and independents 46% of Republicans say this, compared with about 1 in 10 Democrats and independents.

When it comes to Medicaid, fewer Republicans, about one-third, say the government is spending "too much."

Many believe Medicare, Social Security and educa-

tion are underfunded

About 6 in 10 Americans say there is not enough government money going toward Social Security, Medicare or education broadly. But Democrats overwhelmingly think "too little" money is allocated to these areas, while Republicans are happier with the status quo.

Very few think Medicare, Social Security and education are getting "too much" funding. Only about 1 in 10 Republicans say this about either Medicare or Social Security. Roughly one-quarter of Republicans say too much is spent on education.

When it comes to Social Security, about half of Republicans say "too little" is spent, compared with about 7 in 10 Democrats.

Americans are divided on money for border security and the military

Americans are more divided on whether the government is devoting too much money to the military or border security.

About 3 in 10 say the government is spending "too much" on the military, while a similar share say the government is spending "too little."

Close to 4 in 10 say the government is spending "about the right amount." □

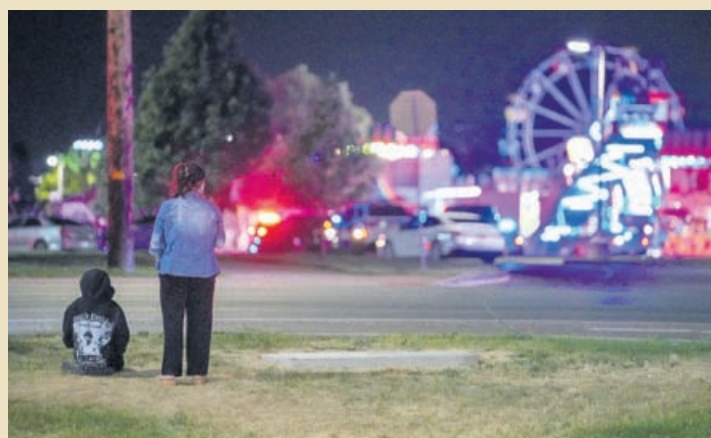
Carnival argument shooting kills 3 in an unusually violent weekend for Salt Lake City area

By MEAD GRUVER

Associated Press

A 16-year-old boy shot five

people in a confrontation between two groups at a carnival in a Salt Lake



Onlookers watch as law enforcement investigate after a reported shooting at WestFest in West Valley City, Utah, June 15, 2025.

Associated Press

City suburb Sunday, killing three of them including an 8-month-old infant, police said.

The shooting in West Valley City a day after an apparently unrelated shooting killed a man at a "No Kings" protest made for an unusually violent weekend in the Salt Lake City area. Police working at WestFest at Centennial Park, about 6 miles (10 kilometers) southwest of downtown Salt Lake City, saw the two groups Sunday night.

"As they approached to break up the altercation, a 16-year-old male from one

of the groups pulled out a gun and fired," the department posted on X. One officer fired back but did not hit anyone.

The shooter struck and killed an 18-year-old man in one of the groups, police said. Besides the infant, a 41-year-old woman bystander also was killed. Two other teens, a 17-year-old girl and a 15-year-old boy, were both hit in the arm, police said. It was not clear if they were connected to the groups involved. A pregnant woman was hurt while trying to get over a fence to flee, po-

lice said. The 16-year-old was quickly taken into custody, police said. His name would not be released because he was a juvenile, West Valley City spokesperson Roxeanne Vainuku said at a news conference late Sunday.

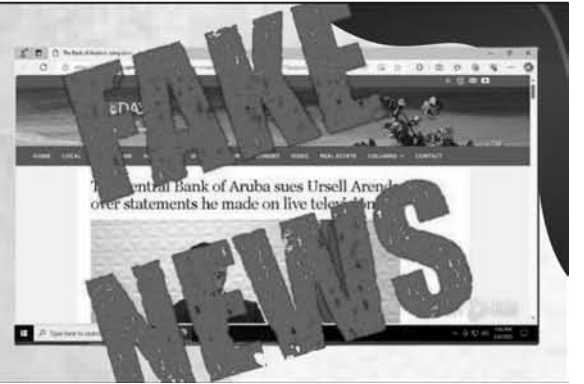
Police were interviewing witnesses to find out more about what happened, Vainuku said.

"We don't know yet if this was gang related. We do know that we have two groups of people who were having some sort of a verbal altercation," Vainuku said. □

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Wisconsin dairy farmer sues Trump administration claiming discrimination against white farmers

By SCOTT BAUER
Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — A Wisconsin dairy farmer alleged in a federal lawsuit filed Monday that the Trump administration is illegally denying financial assistance to white farmers by continuing programs that favor minorities.

The conservative Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty filed the lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture in federal court in Wisconsin on behalf of a white dairy farmer, Adam Faust.

Faust was among several farmers who successfully sued the Biden administration in 2021 for race discrimination in the USDA's Farmer Loan Forgiveness Plan.

The new lawsuit alleges the government has continued to implement diversity, equity and inclusion programs that were instituted under former President Joe Biden. The Wisconsin Institute wrote to the USDA in April



In this photo released by The Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty, Faust's attorneys, Wisconsin dairy farmer Adam Faust, who is suing the Trump administration alleging discrimination against white farmers like him, poses inside his dairy barn in Chilton, Wisconsin, in 2021.

Associated Press

warning of legal action, and six Republican Wisconsin congressmen called on the USDA to investigate and end the programs.

"The USDA should honor the President's promise to the American people to end racial discrimination in the federal government,"

Faust said in a written statement.

"After being ignored by a federal agency that's meant to support agri-

culture, I hope my lawsuit brings answers, accountability, and results from USDA."

Trump administration spokesperson Anna Kelly did not immediately respond to an email Monday seeking comment.

The lawsuit contends that Faust is one of 2 million white male American farmers who are subject to discriminatory race-based policies at the USDA.

The lawsuit names three USDA programs and policies it says put white men at a disadvantage and violate the Constitution's guarantee of equal treatment by discriminating based on race and sex.

Faust participates in one program designed to offset the gap between milk prices and the cost of feed, but the lawsuit alleges he is charged a \$100 administrative fee that minority and female farmers do not have to pay. □

Officers who cover their faces could be charged with a misdemeanor under California proposal



State Senators Anthony Wiener, D-San Francisco, left, and Jesse Arreguin, D-Berkeley, announce a proposed bill that would prohibit law enforcement from covering their faces while working in the state, Monday, June 16, 2025, in San Francisco.

Associated Press

By OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Local, state, and federal law enforcement officers who cover their faces while conducting official business could face a misdemeanor charge in California under a new proposal announced Monday.

The bill would require all law enforcement officials show their faces and be identifiable by their uniform, which should carry their name or other identifier. It would not apply to the National Guard or other troops and it exempts SWAT teams and officers responding to natural disasters.

State Sen. Scott Wiener, a Democrat representing San Francisco, and State Sen. Jesse Arreguin, a Democrat representing Berkeley and Oakland, said the proposal seeks to boost transparency and public trust in law enforcement. It also looks to

protect against people trying to impersonate law enforcement, they said.

"We are seeing more and more law enforcement officers, particularly at the federal level, covering their faces entirely, not identifying themselves at all and, at times, even wearing army fatigues where we can't tell if these are law enforcement officers or a vigilante militia," Wiener said.

"They are grabbing people off our streets and disappearing people, and it's terrifying," he added. In Los Angeles, a series of immigration raids June 6 by federal officers, some with face coverings, triggered days of turbulent protests across the city and beyond and led President Donald Trump to deploy National Guard troops and Marines to the LA area. More than 100 people were detained during those raids and immigrant advocates say they have not been able to contact them. □

U.N. nuclear agency warns of possible contamination inside Iran's Natanz site after Israeli strikes

By **STEPHANIE LIECHTEN-STEIN**

Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — The head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency said Monday that there is a possibility of both radiological and chemical contamination within Iran's main nuclear enrichment facility in Natanz following Israeli strikes, although radiation levels outside the complex are presently normal.

The radiation poses a significant danger if uranium is inhaled or ingested, International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi said. The risk can be effectively managed with appropriate protective measures, such as using respiratory protection devices while inside the facilities, Grossi said.

"The level of radioactivity outside the Natanz site has remained unchanged and at normal levels, indicating no external radiological impact to the population or the environment from this event," he said.

Grossi was addressing an urgent session of the IAEA's board in Vienna that was



This satellite image provided by Maxar Technologies shows the Natanz nuclear enrichment facility, where multiple buildings were destroyed from recent Israeli airstrikes, 135 miles southeast of Tehran, Iran, Saturday, June 14, 2025.

Associated Press

convened at the request of Russia to discuss Israeli attacks against Iranian nuclear facilities. He said that there apparently was no additional damage at Natanz and the Isfahan nuclear research site since Saturday. He said that the main concern inside the Natanz facility is the chemical tox-

icity of a gas called uranium hexafluoride, which is the result of fluorine mixed with the uranium during enrichment. It's extremely volatile, will quickly corrode, can burn the skin and is especially deadly if inhaled, experts say. "Amid these challenging and complex circumstances, it is cru-

cial that the IAEA receives timely and regular technical information about the facilities and their respective sites," Grossi said. Without information, the U.N. agency "cannot accurately assess the radiological conditions and potential impacts on the population and the environ-

ment and cannot provide the necessary assistance." Grossi said that U.N. inspectors would remain present in Iran and inspect the nuclear facilities "as soon as safety conditions allow." He warned that "military escalation threatens lives, increases the chance of a radiological release with serious consequences for people and the environment and delays indispensable work towards a diplomatic solution for the long-term assurance that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon."

Venezuela delivered a joint statement at the special board meeting on behalf of a group of states, among them Iran and Russia, condemning Israel's attack on Iran's nuclear facilities, diplomats said on the condition of anonymity to discuss the closed-door meeting. Satellite photos analyzed by The Associated Press show extensive damage at Iran's main nuclear enrichment facility in Natanz. The images captured Saturday by Planet Labs PBC show multiple buildings damaged or destroyed. □

Austria's chancellor vows to toughen gun laws after a deadly school shooting

By **KIRSTEN GRIESHABER and PHILIPP JENNE**

Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — Austria will toughen its gun laws, its chancellor said Monday, after a 21-year-old former student killed nine students and a teacher at his school last week in what's considered the Alpine country's deadliest post-war attack. The shooting had sparked a debate about Austria's gun laws, which are among the more liberal in the European Union. The assailant in Graz used a shotgun and a pistol which he owned legally, police said shortly after the attack.

"Access to weapons must be regulated even more responsibly in Austria,"

Christian Stocker said during a speech in Parliament in Vienna.

The new laws will include "stricter eligibility requirements for gun ownership and restrictions for certain risk groups," the chancellor said, adding that data-sharing between the different authorities would be improved as well.

"In the future, wherever an individual risk situation is identified, consequences under firearms law must be drawn automatically," Stocker said.

The chancellor said his Cabinet would pass the new measures later this week but didn't give any further details.

However, on Saturday, Stocker told public broad-

caster ORF that toughening the laws could include raising the minimum age for gun buyers.

In the school shooting Tuesday at the BORG Dreierschützengasse high school in Graz, nine students were killed — six girls and three boys aged between 14 and 17 — as well as a teacher. Another 11 people were wounded. The attacker killed himself in a bathroom of his former school.

Traditionally, many in Austria hold weapons, which they often use to go hunting in the Alpine country's vast forests. In general, it's more common to carry a weapon for that and less for self-defense.

According to the Small

Arms Survey, Austria ranks 12th in the world when it comes to holding civilian firearms, with 30 firearms per 100 residents. That's far less than in the U.S. which

tops the ranking with 120 firearms per 100 residents, but more than Austria's neighbor Germany, which ranked 23rd with 19 firearms per 100 residents. □



People commemorate the victims of a shooting at a school, where a former student opened fire two days before, at the central square in Graz, Austria, Thursday, June 12, 2025.

Associated Press

Denmark tests unmanned robotic sailboat fleet with tensions high in the region

By JAMES BROOKS

Associated Press

KØGE MARINA, Denmark

(AP) — From a distance they look almost like ordinary sailboats, their sails emblazoned with the red-and-white flag of Denmark. But these 10-meter (30-foot) -long vessels carry no crew and are designed for surveillance.

Four uncrewed robotic sailboats, known as “Voyagers,” have been put into service by Denmark’s armed forces for a three-month operational trial.

Built by Alameda, California-based company Saildrone, the vessels will patrol Danish and NATO waters in the Baltic and North Seas, where maritime tensions and suspected sabotage have escalated sharply since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022.

Two of the Voyagers launched Monday from Køge Marina, about 40 kilometers (25 miles) south of the Danish capital, Copenhagen. Powered by wind and solar energy, these sea drones can operate autonomously for months at sea. Saildrone says the vessels carry advanced sensor suites radar, infrared and optical cameras, sonar and acoustic monitoring. Their launch comes after



Workers deploy a Saildrone “Voyager”, uncrewed surface vehicle (USV), into the Baltic Sea at the Køge Marina in Køge, eastern Denmark, Monday, June 16, 2025.

Associated Press

two others already joined a NATO patrol on June 6.

Saildrone founder and CEO Richard Jenkins compared the vessels to a “truck” that carries sensors and uses machine learning and artificial intelligence to give a “full picture of what’s above and below the surface” to about 20 to 30 miles (30 to 50 kilometers) in the open ocean.

He said that maritime threats like damage to undersea cables, illegal fishing and the smuggling

of people, weapons and drugs are going undetected simply because “no one’s observing it.”

Saildrone, he said, is “going to places ... where we previously didn’t have eyes and ears.”

The Danish Defense Ministry says the trial is aimed at boosting surveillance capacity in under-monitored waters, especially around critical undersea infrastructure such as fiber-optic cables and power lines.

“The security situation in

the Baltic is tense,” said Lt. Gen. Kim Jørgensen, the director of Danish National Armaments at the ministry. “They’re going to cruise Danish waters, and then later they’re going to join up with the two that are on (the) NATO exercise. And then they’ll move from area to area within the Danish waters.”

The trial comes as NATO confronts a wave of damage to maritime infrastructure including the 2022 Nord Stream pipeline ex-

plosions and the rupture of at least 11 undersea cables since late 2023. The most recent incident, in January, severed a fiber-optic link between Latvia and Sweden’s Gotland island.

The trial also unfolds against a backdrop of trans-Atlantic friction with U.S. President Donald Trump’s administration threatening to seize Greenland, a semiautonomous territory belonging to Denmark, a NATO member. Trump has said he wouldn’t rule out military force to take Greenland.

Jenkins, the founder of Saildrone, noted that his company had already planned to open its operation in Denmark before Trump was reelected. He didn’t want to comment on the Greenland matter, insisting the company isn’t political.

Some of the maritime disruptions have been blamed on Russia’s so-called shadow fleet aging oil tankers operating under opaque ownership to avoid sanctions. One such vessel, the Eagle S, was seized by Finnish police in December for allegedly damaging a power cable between Finland and Estonia with its anchor.

Western officials accuse Russia of behind behind a string of hybrid war attacks on land and at sea. □

Works begin in Ireland to exhume remains of hundreds of babies found at unwed mothers’ home

By SYLVIA HUI

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Officials in Ireland began work Mon-



Fianna Fail leader Micheal Martin talks to the media outside the government building in Dublin, Jan. 22, 2025.

Associated Press

day to excavate the site of a former church-run home for unmarried women and their babies to identify the remains of around 800 infants and young children who died there.

The long-awaited excavation at the former Bon Secours Mother and Baby Home in Tuam, County Galway in western Ireland, is part of a reckoning in an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country with a history of abuses in church-run institutions.

The home, which was run by an order of Catholic nuns and closed in 1961, was one of many such in-

stitutions that housed tens of thousands of orphans and unmarried pregnant women who were forced to give up their children throughout much of the 20th century. In 2014, historian Catherine Corless tracked down death certificates for nearly 800 children who died at the home in Tuam between the 1920s and 1961 but could only find a burial record for one child.

Investigators later found a mass grave containing the remains of babies and young children in an underground sewage structure on the grounds of the

home. DNA analysis found that the ages of the dead ranged from 35 weeks gestation to 3 years.

A major inquiry into the mother-and-baby homes found that in total, about 9,000 children died in 18 different mother-and-baby homes, with major causes including respiratory infections and gastroenteritis, otherwise known as the stomach flu. The sisters who ran the Tuam home had offered a “profound apology” and acknowledged that they had failed to “protect the inherent dignity” of women and children housed there. □

Miss Universe 2024 Victoria Kjaer Theilvig visits Aruba

Early Saturday morning, in a symbolic act at Arikok National Park, Miss Universe 2024 Victoria Kjaer Theilvig from Denmark, accompanied by Prime Minister Mike Eman, planted a native Calbas tree as part of Aruba's ambitious national reforestation plan.

Natasha Silva of the Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF) explained that the Calbas tree is one of 70 native species in Aruba. Restoring Aruba's vegetation requires planting specific trees in specific areas to create ecological balance. Each native tree plays a role in maintaining the surrounding ecosystem, and each one supports the existence of others.

Reforestation is crucial for Aruba's ecological future. With the introduction of na-

tive plants, the government aims to restore the natural landscape, strengthen biodiversity, prevent erosion, and create a more resilient and sustainable environment. Reforestation is also a vital step in combating climate change and helps protect our natural resources for future generations.

The presence of Miss Universe brings significant international attention to the effort, emphasizing that the fight for environmental protection transcends borders. The symbolic act demonstrates how a shared goal can unite people and strengthen the force for sustainability and the honoring of our natural world.

The national reforestation plan will be an intensive effort, with a civic call to the community, NGOs, busi-

nesses, schools, and tourists to take part in rescuing our ecosystem. Accelerated development over recent decades has cost 70% of Aruba's vegetation, and now is the time to act and change course.

Tyson Lopez, director of ACF, went into more detail about how Aruba's ecosystems are interconnected and the important conservation work the Aruba Conservation Foundation is doing.

The presence of Miss Universe brings significant international attention to the effort and underscores that the fight to protect our environment transcends borders. The symbolic act highlights how a shared goal can unite people and strengthen the push for sustainability and honoring our natural environment. □



Place names in San Nicolas and their origins

(Oranjestad)--If you're ever taking a tour of Aruba, San Nicolas would definitely be on your itinerary. From relaxing on the white, sandy beaches of Baby and Roger's Beach, to exploring the prehistoric caves of Quadirikiri and Fontein, you are taking in a full view of what San Nicolas has to offer. But did you know that you are also passing through areas whose names have historical origins? Here are a few place names in San Nicolas and their origin story.

Sero Colorado

On your way to Baby or Roger's Beach, you'll pass by the famous Red Anchor at what was once the entrance to the Colony residential

community and be greeted with red soiled hills by the coast. This is Sero Colorado. Named after the 30-meter, deep red, limestone hill, "Sero Colorado" translates to "Colored Hill". Sero Colorado has deep historical ties with the once-thriving phosphate industry in the area. Matter of fact, there are still underground shafts and passages deep in Sero Colorado from the time of phosphate mining. In 1958, the refinery at the time, Lago, adopted this name for the residential section of its employees.

Vader Piet

Another well visited area, Vader Piet is located in the Arikok National Park. Recognizable sites

within this area includes the Wind Mills and the Quadirikiri Cave. The origin of this name is part historical and speculation, as there are slight deviations from what actually happened.

In 1829, Pieter Lampe was a planter and the person responsible for governing this remote area. As the story goes, Pieter was well known and beloved for his kindness and good treatment of his employees, and was therefore also called Vader Piet (Father Piet). However, he was tragically murdered—some speculate at the hands of a slave. For his work and good heart, the area was named after him.

San Nicolas

Of course we can't forget San Nicolas itself. Much like Vader Piet, the origin of the name San Nicolas has so far two different accounts. In the literal sense, "San Nicolas" translates to "Saint Nicolas", leading many to believe that this district was named after a Spanish saint. Though one account does support this with the theory that the district was named after the saint by Spanish colonizers, the other account is much less divine, but does refer to an influential figure in the area.

Nicolaas van der Biest was a successful landowner during the time of the phosphate boom in late 19th century Aruba. Back then, landowners (most, if not all of them men) were referred to as "Shon" by their subordinates. So, the district was originally named after Shon Nicolaas. Over time, the name evolved into what is now San Nicolas. □

Source: "Aruba: Short History" by Dr. J. Hartog.



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For today we received a lovely message from Linda and Guido Tenuta from Chicago, IL, USA.

They wrote to us saying: "We are Aruba's biggest fans! We've been vacationing there for years and cannot wait to return."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □



Paseo Herencia; An exciting destination for leisure and entertainment

NOORD — Paseo Herencia, situated in the heart of Palm Beach and within walking distance from the high-rise hotels, beckons with a diverse array of shopping, dining, and entertainment options in an outdoor setting.

Shopping

Paseo Herencia presents a captivating selection of stores catering to various preferences, encompassing beachwear, apparel, fragrances, footwear, jewelry, keepsakes, and much more. Unwind at Maggy's, indulging in their salon services while exploring a range of beauty products. For a memorable gift crafted from natural ingredients, explore Aruba Aloe's offerings. Iconic brands like Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Aldo, Carmen Steffens, Nike, and Pandora stand among the favorites.

Dining

Embark on a global culinary journey at Paseo Herencia's diverse array of restaurants, each offering a unique dining experience. From the vibrant flavors of Iguana Cantina's Mexican cuisine to the Spanish elegance of Xixon Spanish Restaurant, the innovative fusion of Pizza and Sushi at Fusion Cuisine, the grilled delights of Skewers Grill, the comfort of The Lazy Turtle, the creativity at Drunk's Denial, and the seafood sensation of



Sexy Shrimps Bar, and the familiar warmth of Starbucks, indulge in an unforgettable gastronomic adventure that spans the world's finest cuisines, all within the charming ambiance of our outdoor center.

VIP Cinema

Indulge in an unparalleled cinematic experience at Caribbean Cinemas VIP, nestled on Paseo Herencia's second floor. Relax in supremely comfortable reclining seats while enjoying movies on high-quality screens with state-of-the-art projection and 7.1 Dolby surround sound. Don't forget to relish the delectable buttery popcorn.

Entertainment

Paseo Herencia offers live entertainment from Sunday to Thursday at 8pm on the center stage, as well as captivating nightly watershows at 7:30pm, 8:30pm, and 9:30pm. Thrill-seekers can explore the Airsoft experience, located behind The Lazy Turtle. For picture-perfect moments, capture Instagram-worthy shots at the Angel Wings installation between Pandora and Free Spirit, or amidst the Flying mosaic hearts behind King Churros. There's more fun in store with delightful kids' activities, including a Kid's carousel and train ride, available every day from 6 pm to 10 pm.

Parking is complimentary for up to two hours when shopping, dining, or enjoying a movie at Paseo Herencia. Simply present your purchase receipt to the parking cashier. For more details on specials and events, visit the Paseo Herencia website at www.paseoherencia.com. □



(Oranjestad)—This week we remember one of our most beloved Aruban giant, Juan Chabaya Lampe—better known as Padu Lampe or Padu del Caribe. As one of the most important and renowned artists in the Aruban cultural sphere, Padu's long career led him to be honored today as "the father of culture."

On April 26th, 1920, Juan Chabaya Lampe "Padu Lampe/Padu del Caribe" was born in Nassaustraat, Oranjestad. He grew up in a happy musical environment, and it is because of this that he developed a love for music. Starting from the age of 12, he was agile in the clarinet, mandolin and cuatro. Henry Lampe, his father, was also a well-known

pianist and musician. In a publication of the informative seminar, "Observer", from august 1st, 1962, Padu's many merits and friendly personality stood out. It was said that he was an excellent pianist with a personal style and full of surprises. Secondly, though the composer was not too familiar with music theory, he showed innovations in his compositions. Lastly, Padu was a promoter of Creole music around the world. One of the most important moments in Aruban history, in which he was able to witness first-hand, was the first radio broadcast on the island on March 20th, 1954. Here, he was accompanied by Antillean guitarist Julian Coco and Hubert "Loi" Booi. In the art world, Padu was

Meet our Aruban trailblazers: Padu Lampe

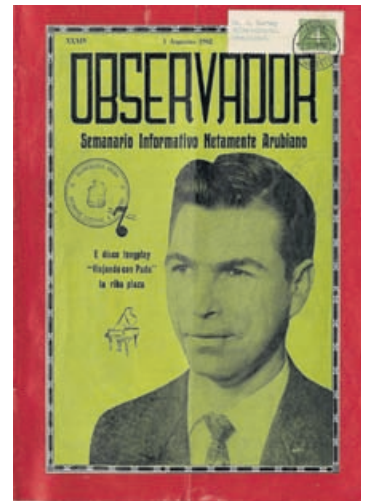
also a known painter. During his youth, he made several painting using his unique style. In 1939, he participated in an art exhibit in New York, where he won a bronze medal for his painting "Typical View of Aruba."

Padu remained a popular artist within the Dutch Antilles and the Caribbean as a pianist, singer, author and painter. Padu Lampe was a local artist who became renowned in Venezuela, Colombia, The U.S. and The Netherlands too. In the 1950s, he sold no less than 50 thousand copies of his long-playing albums (LPs). Padu Lampe was a multifaceted artist, inspired by his interest in parapsychology and supernatural phenomenon. He wrote three books in Papiamentu on the subject in 1986, which was published by the Aruban National Printing Press with sponsorship provided by the Prince Bernhard Funds Netherlands Antilles.

Besides that, Padu passed his exam on "Society to Advanced Ethical Hypnosis"



in 1964 in New Jersey. He received a certificate as a hypnotechnician, which gave him the authority to practice hypnosis in some states. Over the course of his career, he received many accolades and awards in Aruba, Curacao, Venezuela and the Netherlands. Padu del Caribe passed away on November 29th, 2019, at the age of 99 years old. Padu brought the Aruban culture around the world. His legacy will remain ingrained in the Aruban cultural history, and he will be known forever as one of the most influential trailblazers of our community.



Padu will always be in Aruba's heart, because he had composed various special songs dedicated to the mothers of the island; his song "Sonrisa di un baby" ("A baby's Smile") has been written in three different languages. Padu also wrote our national anthem "Aruba Dushi Tera", along with Mr. Rufo Wever. This song was approved by the government of Aruba and was named the official anthem of the island in 1976. Other songs that have been considered as being almost a second anthem for Arubans is the special composition he wrote for his wife Daisy Croes called "Abo so". Daisy later passed away in 1994. □



NOORD - It is hard to imagine this happening today, but years ago people dumped all kinds of refuse straight into the ocean, including old cars, and their household garbage, which of course included lots of glass. Over the next 30 years the pounding waves cleaned the beach, by breaking down everything but glass and pottery. The pounding waves washed the trash up and down, back and forth. Tons of polished, broken glass pieces were created by the pounding surf. These smoothened, colored glass particles then settled along the sea shore in millions, and that is why you can find these beautiful and colorful pieces on the north shore beaches of Aruba.

Especially on the strip on white

Another Treasure of Aruba's Beaches: Sea Glass!

sand between the famous Natural Bridge" and the huge red anchor close to "Grapefield" beach you will be able to find your own pieces of sea glass. The sea glass that was created is the product of a very long and interesting process. It can take anywhere from 10 to 30 years to make sea glass. The name for any piece of glass that finds its way to the ocean and tumbles around in the water long enough is "Sea glass."

The colorful pieces of glass are being used for decoration, handicrafts and jewelry! Once glass makes its way into the ocean, the glass is broken up into shards and is tumbled around in the water, where sand and other rocks act like sandpaper to smooth out its rough edges. Sometimes as the sea glass is passed through fire, it becomes fire glass, the rarest of sea glass with certain inclusions, just like precious gems.

For years, the water beat against

the different kinds of trash being dumped. Glass, household appliances and even motor parts were discarded on the beach. The waves and weather conditions wore down the overwhelming amount of garbage in the water, creating millions of beautiful smooth rocks.

It's hard to believe the short-sighted mistakes we were making that could have potentially ruined these beautiful beaches. But thanks to natural processes, the ocean transformed the trash into the sea glass. Each colored gem on the beach has its own story.

The ruby red glass stones are typically from old car tail-lights.

Then, the sapphire rocks are the remnants of broken apothecary bottles. The most common and the easiest to find are the brown (Amstel & Polar beer), green (Heineken & Balashi beer) and clear glass

which are the soft much loved "soft drink" bottles.

If you like to see the sea glass for yourself, and be in awe of the power of nature, rent a car or jeep and go explore our deserted beaches on the north side of the island. Make it a fun family day! Even if we didn't mean to pollute the Beaches how we did, it is inspiring to see just how the earth can correct our mistakes.

Funny, how trash can change into treasures!

Everybody knows that you are not allowed to take local shells home, but the people working at the airport have no problem you taking sea glass home. A few of those pieces make great souvenirs. You can place them in a wine glass or large bottle for decoration and every time you look at it a smile will light up your face thinking back of your unforgettable Aruba vacation! □

The district of Savaneta

The capital before Oranjestad

(Oranjestad)—Before Oranjestad became the island nation's capital, Aruba's first capital was the district of Savaneta. Here is where the cultural identity of Aruba was born, and from where the rest of the island developed into what it is today.

Savaneta is said to have been the first place where the Caquetio inhabitants first stepped foot on the island. Though there isn't hard evidence to back this up, but considering the legend of the Cacique Arua, it is believed that there were already movements on Aruba—and Savaneta—around 88 AD.

The Caquetios probably made their way to the island either from Venezuela, Colombia or other Caribbean islands in the region, but with good weather it was relatively easy for them to travel back and forth in their canoes. So, since the Caquetios discovered the island, Aruba found her first form of civilization.

It wasn't until 1499 when Aruba met another group of people who set foot on the island: the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda. De Ojeda first took notice of Aruba off the coast of Venezuela, during his exploration of the Latin American country. This was on August 9th, 1499. However, de Ojeda didn't actually sail to the island till 4 days later, on August 23rd, 1499. This was the beginning of the Spanish era on Aruba (1499-1636).

Alonso usually didn't stop at every island or land he saw, especially not in the Caribbean. He would often take notice of land from afar and continue sailing. However, Aruba was an exception. He had

heard that there were "quebracho" trees on the island, which were commonly used to produce dye or paint. But since these trees could not be found in Savaneta, he continued to search in the area of what is now known as Santa Cruz. The best way to transport the tree barks was via a route passing through Savaneta, and so the first road between Savaneta and Santa Cruz was made.

The Dutch colonial era (1636-1805) During the 80-year war between The Netherlands and Spain, Dutch explorers and merchants began to travel to the ABC islands. Once they landed in Aruba, they deported the small Arawakan and Spanish community that was living on the island. This was the beginning of colonization of the ABC islands by the Dutch empire. Around the same, the West Indian Company (WIC) was born. Bonaire and Curaçao were mostly used for plantations, where the Dutch had transported slaves from Africa. Aruba, on the other hand, was mostly used to raise cattle and to house the haring factory. The Dutch had often forced the indigenous community to work for them.

In 1636, when the Netherlands won the war against Spain, the country surrendered the islands to the Dutch.

The Dutch administration appointed the island's first commander, an Irish man named N. Williams. Because the Dutch were interested in other Caribbean islands and countries in South America, they imported Dutch merchants and businessmen, all of whom resided in Savaneta. This way, Savaneta officially



Commandeursbaai (Commander's Bay) at Savaneta



became the island's first capital.

However, at the end of the 18th century, the commander at the time, J.R. Lauffer, moved his office to what is now "Horse Bay" in Oranjestad. Because the highest office on the island moved away from Savaneta, the capital lost its title to what was called then Playa.

How Savaneta got its name

The name Savaneta probably has a Spanish origin. It was said

that when the Spanish climbed a hill called Yara, they saw that the area was mostly open and had no big trees. In Spanish, such a land area is called a "sabana".

Because of its land surface, Savaneta was a great place to construct cattle farms. From here, the farmer culture on Aruba was born. Before the Aruban Gold Rush and the construction of the Refinery in San Nicolas, most residents were farmers, and Savaneta had many inhabitants that farmed fruits and vegetables. They also continued the tradition of raising cattle, like goat, sheep, pigs and horses. Savaneta was one of the first places on the island to have a general farming culture. From this culture, many other traditions were born, like the Dera Gay Holiday that we celebrate every year on June 24th. □

Source: *Historia di Savaneta (History of Savaneta)* by Adolf "Dufi" Kock.



Alonso de Ojeda



"Quebracho" (Kibrahacha) tree; used to make dye and paint

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Spigots

5 Takes in eagerly

11 Lotion additive

12 Large lizard

13 "Das Kapital" author

14 Burrowing rodent

15 PC key

16 Fisherman's hope

17 Merge

19 Bowl-shaped pan

22 Honshu home

24 Was vocal

26 Tel —

27 Folk learning

28 Record material

30 Car type

31 Sports drink suffix

32 Scientist Newton

34 Winter blanket

35 Bounty letters

38 Burrowing rodent

41 Throw in the towel

42 Ventilate

43 Bruins' sch.

44 Sailing ships

45 Approve

DOWN

1 Un-exciting

2 Weary word

3 Large rodent

4 Kinsey topic

5 Put a cap on

6 Some marbles

7 Undiluted

8 Friend of Frodo

9 First número

10 Light touch

16 Storage spot

18 Blue hue

19 Heavy rodent

20 Gumbo base

21 Acute

22 Coffee, in slang

23 Gung-ho

25 "Not guilty," for one

29 Police station event

30 Spotted

33 Catego-rizes

34 "Get lost!"

36 Kunis of "Black Swan"

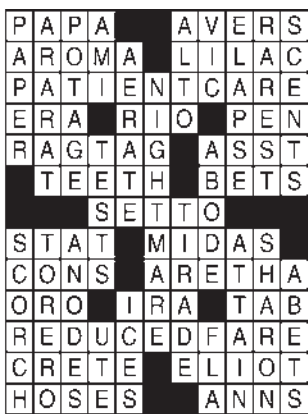
37 Order to Spot

38 Argon or ozone

39 Motor need

40 Debate side

41 Status —



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

6-21

CRYPTOQUOTE

QRNO HXV DYB PRN TNYP

LVNYP UXOY XG HXVCYNWG

DOI XPRNCY, HXV UOKUPN PRN

TNYP DOYQNCY. — DOSNWD

TDYYNPP

Cryptoquote: I WANT TO SING LIKE THE BIRDS SING, NOT WORRYING ABOUT WHO HEARS OR WHAT THEY THINK. — RUMI

Cruise ship Schedule: June 01 - 27 2025

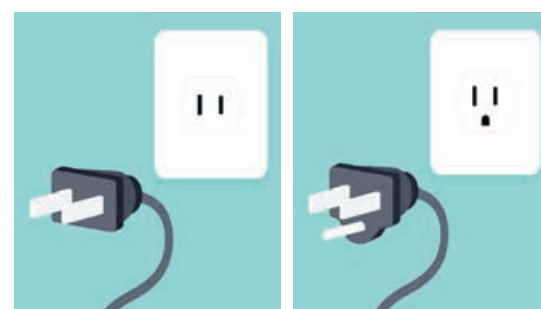
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
SUN	01	SILVER SHADOW FREEWINDS - Dept.	08.00 ****	23.00 22.30	C E	1 -
WED	04	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
TUE	10	CARNIVAL HORIZON CARNIVAL MARDI GRAS	09.00 13.00	23.00 23.00	C I	1 1
TUE	17	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS CARNIVAL VISTA	07.00 13.00	16.00 23.00	B C	1 1
WED	18	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00 08.00 07.00	22.00 23.00 16.00	C B I	1 1 1
TUE	24	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
FRI	27	SEVEN SEAS MARINER	10.00	21.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



The Trump family's next venture, a mobile phone company



Eric Trump, Don Hendrickson, Eric Thomas, Patrick O'Brien and Donald Trump Jr., left to right, participate in the announcement of Trump Mobile, in New York's Trump Tower, Monday, June 16, 2025.

Associated Press

By **BERNARD CONDON**
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Trump family is licensing its name to a new mobile phone service, the latest in a string of ventures announced while Donald Trump is in the White House despite ethical concerns that the U.S. president could mold public policy for personal gain. Eric Trump, the president's son running The Trump Organization in his absence, announced a new venture Monday called Trump Mobile. The plan is to sell phones that will be built in the U.S., and the phone service will maintain a call center in the country as well. The announcement of the new mobile phone and

service, called T1 Mobile, follows several real estate deals for towers and resorts in the Middle East, including a golf development in Qatar announced in April. A \$1.5 billion partnership to build golf courses, hotels and real estate projects in Vietnam was approved last month, though the deal was in the works before Trump was elected. Even oversight of such a company, with the Trump name attached, raises ethical concerns. Trump has already used the federal government to reward his allies and punish his enemies. The Federal Communications Commission, the primary regulatory body overseeing mobile phone companies, has already launched inves-

tigations of media outlets Trump dislikes and, in some cases, is personally suing. Eric Trump said Monday that consumers deserve a phone that aligns with their values.

"Hard-working Americans deserve a wireless service that's affordable, reflects their values, and delivers reliable quality they can count on," he said in a statement.

The company would also enter a highly competitive market that includes companies that have been directly attacked by Donald Trump. □

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San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel.524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Kibrahacha: Tel.583 4908
San Nicolas:
Centro Medico:Tel.584 5794

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

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FAVI- Visually Impaired
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Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



Slick Rick returns after 26 years with 'Victory' album and proves hip-hop storytelling still reigns

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Hip-hop legend Slick Rick is proving his creative spark is far from fading.

The English-born rapper known for his signature eye patch and masterful storytelling returned to the booth with his first new project in nearly three decades. He's reminding the world of his timeless rap prowess on his visual album, "Victory," released Friday.

It marks Slick Rick's first album since 1999's "The Art of Storytelling." This new project is largely self-produced, with the rapper handling 95% of the production and sharing executive producer duties with Emmy-nominated actor and occasional rapper-DJ Idris Elba, who appears on the album alongside Nas, Giggs and Estelle.

"You was a young adult, then a middled aged man and now you're an older man, so my mentality has to grow with it," said Slick Rick, known for his rap classics such as "Children's Story," "La Di Da Di" with Doug E. Fresh and "Mona Lisa." His debut album, "The Great Adventures of Slick Rick,"



Slick Rick poses for a portrait on Friday, June 13, 2025, in New York.

Associated Press

in 1988 hit No. 1 on the Billboard R&B/hip-hop charts. "Victory" was four years in the making, with Slick Rick, now 60, writing and recording the album between his birthplace of London then France, while the visuals were filmed in the United States, United Kingdom and Africa.

Slick Rick believes his voice still resonates in hip-hop. He said the subjects he tackles have grown with him.

"Can't always be children all the time," he said. "We grow and talk about things that interest us at this age." In a recent interview, Slick Rick spoke with The Associated Press about how storytelling plays a role in today's rap, his relationship with Elba and how hip-hop has no limitations. Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: How did you and Idris hook up?

SLICK RICK: We met at a party and then we clicked. His people reached out to me, and they wanted to make an album. They flew me to England and France. I hung out with Idris at his cribs, and we just did what we do. We just had fun, and then when we was finished, we said, "Yeah, we're ready to bring it to the marketplace."

AP: Did you ever feel hesitant stepping back into the

spotlight, or did this album feel like destiny?

SLICK RICK: It might've been a little hesitation, but you're just having fun. We just bringing it to the marketplace and see what happens. There's no pressure or nothing. We're bringing it to the people to see if they like it. Feed them.

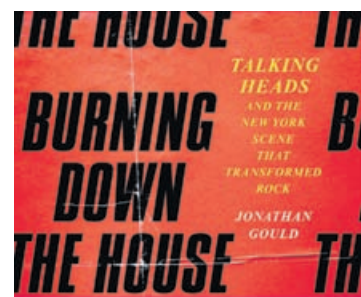
AP: When did you feel like this project was ready for public consumption?

SLICK RICK: When we were in the studio with Idris doing our thing, I checked the reactions of people. But then I saw people in their happy place. Once I saw that, I'm good. I see him and his people's happy. A little dancing. Popped a little Moet. We were having a good time.

AP: You blended hip-hop melodies with various sounds including reggae and house music. What was your vision behind this musical approach?

SLICK RICK: It's what Black people like. We're not just hip-hop. We like reggae. We like house music. Let's say like the Beatles or Barry Manilow. We go all over the place. Dionne Warwick, Diana Ross. □

Book Review: A new biography goes long and deep on the rise and fall of rock band Talking Heads



This cover image released by Mariner Books shows "Burning Down the House: Talking Heads and the New York Scene That Transformed Rock" by Jonathan Gould.

Associated Press

By ANN LEVIN
Associated Press

Talking Heads fans, rejoice! Hard on the heels of the re-release of "Stop Making Sense," the 1984 Jonathan Demme film widely considered the best concert movie ever made, Jonathan Gould has published a comprehensive biography of the seminal band that injected an art school vibe into popular music and forever changed rock 'n' roll.

Gould, the author of well-received books on Otis Redding and the Beatles, chronicles in meticulous detail the rise and fall of the band that got its start in New York City's underground punk scene and ended up touring the world with a repertoire shaped by blues, funk and jazz.

He begins "Burning Down the House: Talking Heads and the New York Scene That Transformed Rock" with a vivid description of the drizzly June night in 1975 when the original trio singer/songwriter David Byrne, bassist Tina Weymouth and drummer Chris Frantz made its debut at the seedy club CBGB in downtown Manhattan, opening for the Ramones before a handful of patrons.

With their "unremarkable haircuts" and "nondescript casual clothes," they offered a sharp contrast to the "baroque turn" that rock fashion had taken in the 1970s,

Gould observes.

"The qualities that characterized this neophyte group in their first public performance centered on the awkward, disquieting intensity of their singer-guitarist, David Byrne, their sketchy, skeletal arrangements, and the quirky intelligence of their songs," Gould writes. "Tall and thin, with a long neck and an anxious, wide-eyed stare, Byrne stood stiffly at the microphone, his upper body jerking and jiggling like a shadow puppet as he scratched out chords on his guitar."

Instead of doing his best to command the stage and the room, Byrne looked trapped by his surroundings, as if he were prepared, at any moment, to make a break for the door."

Within a couple years of their zeitgeist-changing performances, they enlisted keyboardist/guitarist Jerry Harrison, adding a much-needed dose of professionalism to the band. Gould, a former professional musician, writes exceedingly well about music but suffers from a kind of completism, cramming in an almost mind-numbing level of detail including the name of the elementary school in Pittsburgh where a young Frantz first took up drums to every military posting of Weymouth's naval aviator father. □

'Dialed in' from October, the Panthers are a win away from repeating as Stanley Cup champions

By STEPHEN WHYNO
AP Hockey Writer
FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)

— The banner commemorating the first Stanley Cup title in Florida Panthers history had not been raised to the rafters yet when a newcomer realized just what it was like to join the champions on a title defense.

It was their final exhibition game in Quebec City in early October after a high-intensity training camp, and the focus was already there.

"Last preseason game, usually guys are taking it a little easier, getting ready for the season, play some soccer, have a coffee, get on the ice," A.J. Greer recalled Monday. "There were 22 guys working out full workouts before the game. It's like we didn't even have a game. Guys were doing power lifting, guys were doing lower-body, upper-body, bike sprints before the game and I'm thinking to myself, 'They're dialed in here.'"

And that was before the real hockey started. Now, more than 250 days later, the Panthers are one win away from repeating as champions, and the Stanley Cup will be in the building with their chance to extend its stay in Florida if they defeat the Edmonton Oilers in Game 6 of the final on home ice Tuesday night. "It's business as usual," top-



Florida Panthers' Matthew Tkachuk, center, celebrates after his goal against the Edmonton Oilers with Sam Reinhart, left, and Aleksander Barkov, right, during the first period in Game 4 of the NHL hockey Stanley Cup Final in Sunrise, Fla., Thursday, June 12, 2025.

Associated Press

line winger Sam Reinhart said. "We're obviously excited about the position we're in. You put all the work to be playing at this time of year, so we're excited."

They also know what to expect this time around. Florida lost its first opportunity to close out Edmonton after going up 3-0 in the final last year, then let the next two slip away before finally getting the job done in Game 7.

Everything was new then, from handling the butterflies and the logistics of families getting to town to

thinking about the order of passing the big silver chalice around on the ice.

"There's a whole bunch of stuff you have to go through the first time and then there's all these superstitions you don't want to talk about it, you want to talk about it well, there are things you have to talk about," coach Paul Maurice said.

"All of that stuff got dealt with last year when we went through it for the first time. Now, just get ready for the hockey game. It's a different set of emotions for us."

This final has unfolded differently, with the teams being tied after two games and then again through four.

The Panthers jumped all over the Oilers to win Game 5 in Edmonton on Saturday night to set the stage to clinch.

That was utter domination, and, unlike last year, their first chance to hoist the Cup comes in front of home fans in Sunrise.

"We're just excited to be back home, and we're excited to hopefully keep that going after last game," winger Matthew

Tkachuk said. "We think we've played pretty good hockey over this whole series, in the whole playoffs, but especially the last few, so we know this is the type of game we have to play." Florida is looking to become just the third team to go back to back since the NHL's salary cap era began in 2005, joining the Tampa Bay Lightning in 2020 and '21 and the Pittsburgh Penguins in '16 and '17. Just 18 have done it in league history.

The Panthers are favored on BetMGM Sportsbook to take Game 6. After laying an egg and getting pushed to the brink of elimination, the Oilers are hoping to drag the series back to Edmonton for Game 7 on Friday night.

"For whatever reason, our group doesn't like to make it easy on ourselves," Oilers captain and co-playoff leading scorer Connor McDavid said. "We've put ourselves in another difficult spot, and it's our job to work our way out of it."

Only eight of the 44 teams to fall behind 3-2 in the final have gone on to win. Boston was the last to do it in 2011 against Vancouver, extending Canada's Cup drought that goes back to 1993.

The Panthers would love to make this the 31st consecutive season it is won by a team in the U.S. □

Ben Shelton gives the U.S. 3 men in the ATP top 10 for the first time since 2006

LONDON (AP) — Ben Shelton rose two spots to No. 10 in the ATP rankings on Monday, joining No. 4 Taylor Fritz and No. 8 Tommy Paul to give the United States three men in the top 10 for the first time in nearly 20 years.

In April 2006, Andy Roddick was No. 4, James Blake was No. 7, and Andre Agassi was No. 10.

There are four American women in the WTA's top 10 this week again, and five in the top 13: No. 2 Coco Gauff, No. 3 Jessica Pegula, No. 6 Madison Keys, No. 9 Emma Navarro and No. 13 Amanda Anisimova. Aryna Sabalenka remains at No. 1, a spot she took over in October from Iga Swiatek, who dropped to No. 8 on Monday.

Tatjana Maria, a 37-year-old German, rose

43 spots to No. 43 on Monday by winning the Queen's Club title as a qualifier.

The 22-year-old Shelton, who won the 2022 NCAA singles title for the University of Florida, is only in his third full season on tour. He'd never traveled out of the U.S. until 2023.

Shelton is a two-time Grand Slam semifinalist, making it that far at the U.S. Open in 2023 and the Australian Open this January.

Fritz moved up three spots to match his career high after winning a grass-court title at Stuttgart, Germany, on Sunday. The top three men remained the same: No. 1 Jan-nik Sinner, No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz and No. 3 Alexander Zverev, the runner-up to Fritz in Stuttgart. □



Ben Shelton of the U.S. returns the ball to Germany's Alexander Zverev during the semifinal of the Stuttgart tennis Open in Stuttgart, Germany, Saturday June 14, 2025.

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U.S. Open champion J.J. Spaun turned a free fall into a title at rain-soaked Oakmont

By **EDDIE PELLIS**

AP National Writer

OAKMONT, Pa. (AP) — Nobody backs their way into a U.S. Open title.

J.J. Spaun wasn't about to be the first to say he did.

On a day built for umbrellas, ponchos and industrial-sized squeegees, Spaun reversed his own free fall, took advantage of several others' and hit two shots that turned him into a major champion while finally, mercifully, creating a moment to remember at the rain-soaked brute called Oakmont.

"I just tried to dig deep," said the 34-year-old Californian who can now call himself a major champion. "I've been doing it my whole life."

The shots that will go down in history are the drive he hit on the reachable par-4 17th and the 65-foot putt he sank with the sun going down and the rain falling on 18.

The first set up a birdie that put him in the lead by himself for good. The second was for emphasis he needed only a two-putt, after all that ensured this U.S. Open would finish with one and only one player under par. The 65 footer, the longest of any putt made all tournament, closed out a back nine 32 and left Spaun at 1-under 279 for the tournament. His 72 was the highest closing-round score for a U.S. Open winner in 15 years.

But that wasn't Sunday's takeaway.



J.J. Spaun celebrates after sinking a birdie putt on the 18th hole to win the U.S. Open golf tournament at Oakmont Country Club Sunday, June 15, 2025, in Oakmont, Pa.

Associated Press

Rather, it was the 401.5 feet worth of putts the champion made over four days. And the fact that Spaun joined none other than Ben Hogan, Jack Nicklaus, Tom Watson and Jon Rahm as the fifth U.S. Open winner to finish birdie-birdie.

"I just felt like you keep putting yourself in these positions, like eventually you're going to tick one off," said Spaun, whose loss in a play-off to Rory McIlroy three months ago at The Players Championship was his third top-three finish of 2025. But at the U.S. Open? In that kind of weather? None of it seemed possible when the rain started coming down during the tail end of a front-nine 40 that took Spaun from one shot

back at the start of the day to four behind and fading fast.

Coaches told him, 'Dude, just chill,' and Spaun did

A 1-hour, 37-minute rain delay ensued. It was a break that changed everything. "They were just like, 'Dude, just chill,'" Spaun said of the pep talk he got from his coaches.

They suggested that, if earlier in the week, he'd been told he could be four shots back with nine holes to play, he would have jumped at the chance. "They just said: 'Just let it come to you, be calm. Stop trying so hard,'" Spaun said.

Staying calm resulted in making a downhill 40 footer on the par-5 12th for birdie,

then a 22-foot birdie on 14 to take the lead by himself for the first time, at even par.

Everywhere else, there were meltdowns in the rain. Third-round leader Sam Burns thinned a shot out of a divot and over the 11th green en route to the first of two back-nine double bogeys. He shot 40 on the back and finished tied for seventh.

Adam Scott, the only major champion in the top 10 after Saturday's play, shot 41 in the rain on the back nine and dropped to 12th.

"I didn't adapt to those conditions well enough," Scott said.

Tyrrell Hatton, who shot 72, briefly threatened and was part of a brief five-way

deadlock for the lead before making bogey on the last two holes to finish tied for fourth.

Robert MacIntyre turned out to be Spaun's most persistent challenger. The left-hander from Scotland faded his drive just short of the green on the way to birdie on 17 to get to 1 over and set the target for Spaun, who was playing three groups behind.

MacIntyre was waiting in the locker room when Spaun hit his approach on 18 to 65 feet. Everyone knew it was no sure two-putt. Hardly anyone expected Spaun to get down in one.

"To watch him hole the putt on 12 down the hill there was unreal," said Viktor Hovland, who played in the twosome with Spaun. "And then he makes another one on 14 that was straight down the hill. And then the one on 18, it's just absolutely filthy there." **A sick kid and 'chaos' ends with a trophy**

When they close the book on Spaun's victory at this rainy U.S. Open, maybe the most telling story will be about the way his Father's Day began. As much as the front-nine 40, it had to do with the 3 a.m. trip to the drug store for his daughter Violet, who Spaun said was "vomiting all over."

"It was kind of a rough start to the morning," he said. "I'm not blaming that on my start, but it kind of fit the mold of what was going on, the chaos." □